

OBSERVATIONS

ON A

NEW PREPARATION OF BALSAM COPAIVA.

BY GEORGE W. CARPENTER,

OF PHILADELPHIA.



BALSAM Copaiva being a medicine used in the practice of almost every physician, its characters, effects and uses are consequently familiar to them. It is admitted by all, to be one of the most nauseous and disagreeable articles of the materia medica. Disguised or mixed as it may be, its unpleasant nature is still manifest, and little if at all diminished, communicating its nauseous taste and imparting to the breath its disagreeable odour which is experienced for several hours after each dose, and frequently acting as an emetic, or cathartic.* From these circumstances, its use is frequently abandoned in cases where it otherwise would be of the highest utility, and even where it is almost indispensable, and other remedies much less efficient are substituted, thus protracting the cure which could have been speedily effected by the copaiva.

Since the introduction of this remedy down to the present period, it has ever been a desideratum to obviate these inconveniences, and it is a circumstance not less unfortunate

* Our distinguished Professor of Practice, in the 1st volume of his Therapeutics, page 417, observes, that two circumstances frequently interfere with the exhibition of copaiva, and detract from its utility. It sometimes purges, and when it does, its efficacy is lost or greatly diminished. If laudanum does not check this injurious tendency, it must be discontinued till the bowels recover their tone. To the stomachs of some persons the copaiva is so exceedingly offensive, that it cannot be retained. As it is hardly possible to disguise the taste of the article, it is sometimes very difficult to overcome this prejudice.—*See Chapman's Therapeutics.*

and much to be regretted, *than* it is singular in its character, *that* amidst the rapid march of improvement and discoveries, (which forms a peculiar character in modern chemistry and pharmaceutical knowledge,) an improvement in the exhibition of copaiva, should so long have evaded the vigilant researches of the critical and scrutinizing chemist, and pharmacist. With these premises, I feel happy to inform the medical faculty that I have succeeded in consolidating copaiva to a proper consistence, for being formed into pills. The consolidated copaiva is the oil and resin united, and consequently possesses all the properties of the balsam. It may be made into four grain pills, and one or two pills taken three times a day; two pills are equal to thirty drops of the balsam. These pills may be taken without the least inconvenience, neither communicating taste, nor imparting odour to the breath, it is also retained without the least disquietude or uneasiness to the stomach, and I am informed by Dr. Rousseau, that in large doses, it does not purge.

This article differs, very essentially, from what is termed extract, or resin copaiva, being not in the least deteriorated in the preparation, nor at all weakened by admixture of any foreign substance for the purpose of giving consistence. It is particularly recommended to the faculty for its numerous advantages over the *balsam*, and all its preparations. As the oil of copaiva is an active preparation, it is the best mode of using this article, for being united with the resin it may be made into pills which can be taken without experiencing the nauseating taste of the oil, while the oil alone cannot be taken otherwise than in draught, which will subject it to the same inconveniences with the fluid balsam, having its disagreeable taste with its unpleasant effects.

The consolidated copaiva is manufactured and sold at Geo. W. Carpenter's Chemical Warehouse, No. 301, Market street, Philadelphia.